

# Vern Tinch

Indiana State Representative, District 46

## How did we get here?

A brief history of Indiana's finances

Gov. Frank O'Bannon called a special legislative session this year to deal with escalating problems in the state budget. Indiana used to have a budget surplus. What has changed?

After the longest economic expansion on record in the 1990s, Indiana's coffers were full to overflowing. Legislators opted to cut taxes rather than keep such a large surplus, and returned over \$1.5 billion in taxes since 1996. Those cuts aided homeowners, renters, the working poor, senior citizens, and others in our state.

By January of 2000, though, the national economy was slowing. Within a few months it was clear that our nation's finances were taking a turn for the worse. With Medicaid spending on the rise, 17 states faced budget shortfalls by Fiscal Year 2001, Indiana among them. Last July Gov. O'Bannon ordered \$113 million in one-time cuts in an effort to address the growing budget deficit.

The terrorist attacks last September only worsened the situation. Consumers spent less. Business slowed, cutting production and cutting jobs. That meant less money flowed into the state accounts from sales taxes, inventory taxes and individual and corporate income taxes.

In May of this year, Indiana revenue collections were 14.7 percent below expectation. Imagine if your paycheck were 14 percent smaller this month. You would find ways to cut back, and then you would re-evaluate your situation.

Gov. O'Bannon made a total of \$949 million in spending cuts in Fiscal Year 2002, but our state was still in the red. The legislature met to re-evaluate. House Bill 1001 is the result.

**Imagine if your paycheck were 14% smaller this month.**

## Special session ends with success

New plan to cut property taxes, attract business to state



Summer, 2002

Dear Friends:

In the final days of the recent special session, members of the General Assembly passed a bipartisan program that will significantly impact the lives

of most people in this state.

This plan, contained in House Bill 1001, provides answers to several serious questions facing Indiana. It **protects property owners** from the impact of the court-ordered reassessment. It provides **funding to help support critical state programs and services**. Also, it **restructures our state's tax code** to provide more economic incentives to help create more jobs for Hoosiers. (See the back of this card for more detail.)

The most significant part of House Bill 1001 is the **relief it will provide for home, farm and business owners from the**

**court-ordered property reassessment**. For homeowners, most of this relief will come through shifting 60 percent of school operating costs to the state, implementing a standard deduction on all homes of \$35,000, and increasing the homestead credit to 20 percent. These changes will help reduce residential property tax rates by double digits.

We also provide **help to working families** on lower incomes by increasing the earned income tax credit. Renters will receive an increase in the deduction they

can take on their state income tax returns.

House Bill 1001 makes significant strides in changing our state's tax code to encourage economic development. We will **eliminate Indiana's corporate gross income tax** on January 1, 2003, and phase out the inventory tax over the next five years. Business leaders consider these changes crucial to expand current businesses and entice companies to locate here and create jobs for Hoosiers.

Finally, we make several **changes in the state's gaming industry that can help Indiana remain competitive** with surrounding states. Riverboat operators will be given the option of allowing continuous access to casinos, a process commonly

known as dockside gaming. Additionally, this bill creates a **revenue sharing plan** that will provide all Indiana counties with a portion of the proceeds generated by the riverboats.

There are tax increases included in this legislation, but they are designed to provide

funding assistance in crucial areas. See the back of this card for a tax comparison with neighboring states.

House Bill 1001 does not contain all the reforms I would have liked. We still must work on long-term solutions that can keep our state moving forward.

I encourage you to contact me with any comments and concerns regarding state government.

Sincerely,

Vern Tinch

### Property tax reform

- Increases Homeowners Exemption from \$6,000 to \$35,000
- Increases Homestead Credit from 4% to 20%
- Establishes new 20% Property Tax Replacement Credit on all individual and business real property
- Cuts property taxes for farmers on average of 13%

# Economic development for Indiana

House Bill 1001 assists economic development across Indiana, and it couldn't come at a better time. In recent years, Indiana has lost more manufacturing, retail and service jobs than anywhere else in the United States, and that certainly has contributed to the recession that has impacted our state so severely.

How do we create more jobs for Hoosiers? Create an environment where businesses will want to come to Indiana, and where companies will want to expand their operations.

House Bill 1001 addresses these concerns in several ways:

- Eliminating the unpopular inventory tax over a five-year period. Indiana is one of the few states in the country that still enacts this penalty on businesses.

- Removing both the corporate gross income tax and the corporate supplemental net income tax.

Reducing the tax burden for employers is only one part of the puzzle. We also must help companies create an environment where they can take advantage of the cutting edge technology that enables our state to be competitive in a changing global economy. Several provisions help achieve this goal:

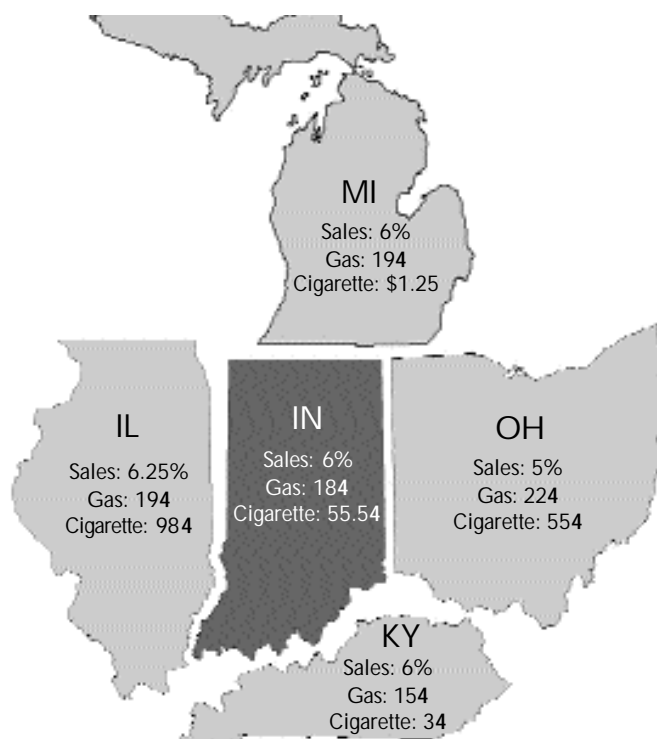
- Tax credits to companies that provide venture capital to startup firms.

- Doubling the state's research and development tax credit to 10 percent.

- Providing \$30 million for the 21st Century Research and Technology Fund for 2003 and 2004.

The impact of these changes will be felt in the years to come. Business owners will think twice about relocating to another state. Companies will find an economic profile dedicated to creating well-paying jobs. They will be even more inclined to take advantage of the Hoosier work ethic that has made us the envy of other states. With the provisions for business in House Bill 1001, Indiana is back on track.

## How does Indiana rank with its neighbors?



*Data from the Federation of Tax Administrators*

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